Inside/OUT 2016/2017
Speakers’ Series

Our 14\textsuperscript{th} annual speakers’ series profiling queer research and work at the University of Alberta

All meetings are FREE, open to all members of the university and larger community, and are normally held on Thursdays from 5:00-6:00PM\textsuperscript{*}

\textsuperscript{*}unless otherwise noted

Room 7-152 (7\textsuperscript{th} Floor Education North Building)
Department of Educational Policy Studies, Faculty of Education

The Inside/OUT Speakers’ Series is committed to making our events accessible to all participants. Sign language interpreting services, realtime captioning or other access-related services or accommodations may be arranged. Please direct all requests to ismss@ualberta, at least one week before each session.

FALL 2016

September 22 – The (De)Professionalisation of Gay Male Academic Identity: Locking the Closet Door on South African University Campuses

\textit{Dr. Jacques Rothmann, School of Social and Government Studies, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa}

Considered as a principal method in organising forms of sexual orientation, the heterosexual/homosexual binary emphasises the centrality of heteronormativity in the everyday lives of social and sexual actors; thus homosexuality is not only differentiated from heterosexuality, but potentially also rendered subordinate to its heterosexual counterpart. Using this as a point of departure, the article focuses on a critical qualitative sociological study undertaken into the influence of a binary logic on gay male academicians on South African university campuses. Primary emphasis is on these men’s choice either to professionalise or deprofessionalise their gay male identity on their respective university
campuses through engaging the contemporary research on the experiences of self-identified homosexual academics as well as the seminal contributions of Erving Goffman (1971) and George Herbert Mead (1962). Evident from the findings, was that the participants conform to heteronormativity on the respective university campuses through consciously reflecting on the expectations of their generalised other.

**** This above event will take place in 7-114 Education North

October 3 – The Triangulation of Homocolonialism: Muslim Homophobia, Islamophobia and LGBT Identities

Dr. Momin Rahman, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Trent University

This talk provides an overview of research on lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) Muslim sexualities through a focus on three key contexts:

i. cross-cultural differences and similarities in Muslim sexual diversity;
ii. contemporary Muslim homophobia and its relationship to colonialism and Islamophobia; and
iii. the recent internationalization of LGB rights and the dangers of imposing western versions of identity and equality politics on non-western contexts - a triangulated process of homocolonialism.

Throughout, it is argued that understanding LGB Muslims requires a theoretical framework that is both epistemologically intersectional and ontologically queer in order to fully grasp these complicated socio-political contexts for LGB Muslims. Their identities are best understood as ‘queer intersectional identities’ because they are the ‘impossible’ subjects whose very existence disrupts the ontological coherence of dominant identity categories and political strategies of both ‘LGB’ and ‘Muslim’. This argument draws on formulations of queer theory that emphasize how non-normative sexualities present a constant disruption to normative categories of gender and sexual identity. It combines this analysis with intersectionality theory and its focus on a standpoint epistemology that demands attention to the experiences of those located at significant intersections, because their experiences contest dominant ways of understanding oppression and politics. The concluding sections discuss how we might move beyond the triangulation of homocolonialism in order to make the subject of LGB Muslims more possible, both in western and Muslim consciousness.

**** This above event will take place in 7-102 Education North

November 17 – A Family Outing – A New Book by Ruby Remenda Swanson

Ruby Remenda Swanson, General Manager of the University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Garden

*A reading & Q+A discussion with the author*
In 2002, my 16-year-old son called to say he had to talk to me after school. My life changed two hours later when he came to my office, closed the door and with his hand still on the door knob said, “I’m gay.” Despite my initial reaction of shock, fear, hiding and denial, I soon became a public advocate for equality and acceptance of my son and fellow human beings like him. A Family Outing is a story about the experiences I’ve had over the last 13 years as a result of having a gay son.

A Family Outing describes what it was like to hear my child tell me he was gay. It tells how I responded the first time I saw him kissing his boyfriend. I address the deeply homophobic time in which baby boomers like me grew up, the subsequent emergence of the gay rights movement and how the AIDS epidemic transformed the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender landscape in North America. It’s a story about discovering our families’ gay great-uncles and learning about their lives, about operating the spotlight at a drag queen show and marching in Pride Parades. My book is about being an advocate and helping others, but it’s also about enduring taunts from religious fundamentalists and political protestors. It’s a story about the discrimination that gay people still face today.

Excerpts from A Family Outing have been published in the Edmonton Journal and Alberta Views magazine, and performed at The Loud and Queer Cabaret, an influential arts cabaret in Edmonton.

November 29 – Islamic Law and Muslim Same-Sex Unions
Dr. Junaid Jahangir, Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts

*Book launch*

This book is written with the objective of reasonably addressing the need of Muslim gays and lesbians for a life which involves intimacy, affection and companionship within the confines of a legal contract. Contemporary conservative Muslim leaders unreasonably promote false marriages with straight spouses, failing which they prescribe the "solution" of permanent celibacy as a "test." This book delves into an extensive scholarship on the same sources that conservative Muslim leaders draw on—the Qur’an, Hadith and jurisprudence. It is argued that the primary sources of Muslim knowledge addressed sexual acts between the same gender in the context of inhospitality, exploitation, coercion and disease, but not true same-sex unions; past Muslim scholarship is silent on the issue of sexual orientation and Muslim same-sex unions. The arguments of contemporary conservative Muslim leaders are deconstructed and the case for Muslim same-sex unions is made based on jurisprudential principles and thorough arguments from within the Muslim tradition.

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WINTER 2017

iSMSS
Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services
January 19 – Understandings of Gender and Sexuality and Attitudes Towards Homosexuality Among Male Major Midget AAA Ice Hockey Players in Canada

Dr. Cheryl Macdonald, iSMSS/You Can Play Postdoctoral Fellow

*A small welcome reception for Cheryl will be held after this talk*

This doctoral research examines male Major Midget AAA ice hockey in Canada as a site for the changing perceptions of, and attitudes towards, homosexuality in boys’ and men’s hockey. Qualitative and quantitative surveys, interviews, and a social media content analysis were used to identify and analyze the ways in which gender and sexuality are understood amongst the players as well as how their attitudes towards masculinity and homosexuality are shaped and presented in their interactions with teammates and the individuals closest to them. Major Midget AAA is the most elite level at which youth between the ages of fifteen and eighteen can play before moving on to Junior hockey in Canada. This level is a unique site for an investigation of this nature because the players occupy a unique nexus through which they participate in a sport where homosexuality has been historically unacceptable, yet they are also considered members of a generation that is understood to be much more accepting of homosexuality than its predecessors because it is increasingly visible to them on television, the internet, and perhaps even amongst their families and friends.

The study situates itself within a contemporary body of literature that is divided regarding the current status of homophobia in sport. On the one hand, ‘boys’ and men’s ice hockey in Canada is characterized in academic literature as encouraging stereotypically or traditionally masculine traits such as aggression, mental and physical toughness, defiance of authority, and anti-femininity. On the other hand, there is evidence that sport is not fully responsible for this kind of socialization and some scholars have begun to argue that male athletes are becoming increasingly open to other presentations of masculinity that diverge from the stereotypical and traditional ones, including a higher rate of acceptance of gay male athletes. The findings of the study occupy a position between these two camps, suggesting that although young male ice hockey players may not be entirely averse to the idea of homosexuality in ice hockey, some have reservations about the potential of having an openly gay teammate.

February 16 – Queering the Heavens: On the Homoerotics of Ancient Greek Constellations

Dr. Selina Stewart, Department of History and Classics, Faculty of Arts

The homoerotics of the Ancient Greek – and to a lesser extent, the Ancient Roman – worlds is now well-acknowledged, if far from fully investigated. Pioneering works of the last century such as Louis Crompton’s Homosexuality and Civilization, Foucault’s Histoire de la Sexualité and John Boswell’s Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality have succeeded in discrediting some of the major platforms of Western heteronormative historiography, and recently works such as James Davidson’s The Greeks and Greek Love have immeasurably increased our understanding of gay and lesbian culture in the Athens of Plato’s Symposium, for example. But given the wealth of textual and other
sources from the ancient world that pertain to LGBTQ+ identities and orientations, there remains a great deal of work to be done. As a case in point, Ancient Greek celestial astronomy, in partnership with that of medieval Arab astronomers, gives us most of the major stars and modern constellations of the northern hemisphere, but it has yet to be examined for homoerotic content or context. "Queering the Heavens" explores the rise - and in one case the fall - of a handful of Ancient Greek homoerotic constellations: their origins in the ancient world and their fate in the modern.

March 9 – Days of Our Lives: A Glimpse into the Experiences Shaping the Health of Edmonton’s GBQT Men

Brook Biggin, Community Education Facilitator, HIV Edmonton

For far too long we have had inadequate data related to behaviours and experiences that shape the health and wellbeing of gay, bi, queer, and trans (GBQT) men in Edmonton. Through partnering with the Community Based Research Centre for Gay Men’s Health, HIV Edmonton and the Edmonton Men’s Health Collective were able to guide an Edmonton-specific analysis of the 2014/15 Sex Now Survey, the largest health-related survey of GBQT men in Canada. With 363 Edmonton-based respondents, this project has provided the largest sample of recent Edmonton-specific data related to the health of GBQT men, allowing us to better understand the needs of our community so that relevant stakeholders can respond in an evidence-based manner.

Beyond simply obtaining descriptive data from the Edmonton sample, we also wished to compare our data with that of the Vancouver sample, an urban counterpart which has historically had stronger infrastructure as it relates to GBQT men’s health. This has allowed us to determine specific areas where Edmonton is faring worse than Vancouver and identify specific interventions present within that context which might be adapted to Edmonton with the hope of positively impacting the health and wellbeing of Edmonton’s GBQT population.

Through looking at interventions employed in places like Vancouver, in addition to reviewing relevant literature, we have had the opportunity to develop recommendations for stakeholders working in areas related to GBQT men’s health. Now that we have the 2014/15 Sex Now Survey data as a baseline as a baseline, we will follow up with future.

March 30 – Sad-Eyed Loners? Shifting Representations of LGBTQ+ Teen Mental Health in Young Adult Fiction

Meredith Snyder, Pre-PhD Candidate, Department of English and Film Studies, Faculty of Arts

The potential of comics creation to be a self-actualizing tool for queer youth in the context of community art education remains understudied, as does its potential to be a methodological tool for data analysis and representation in queer and qualitative research. Michel Levesque has explored these topics in his graduate research. He discusses key aspects of his Master's research, an arts-informed case study
with queer youth at an LGBT youth centre in New York City, along with his in-progress doctoral research on the role of comics creation in building queer youth resilience.

April 17 – (Panel Session 1 of 2) - Fitting In: The Embodied and Political Intersection of Fat and Trans

Tony Luong, ’15 BA, Department Women’s and Gender Studies, Faculty of Arts

What we wear contributes to gender presentation, which shapes how we move in the world. While we all must navigate beauty standards, fat and trans bodies are especially subject to social stigma and punishment since they do not "fit" the societal expectations of what constitutes an ideal and desirable body type for each gender. In order to address this, Francis Ray White (2014) calls attention to the gap in literature that addresses fat and trans as an embodied and political intersection. Our project attempts to open future thinking about this intersection: when bodies are neither binary nor slender, can clothing provide an adequate avenue for gender expression? If there are limited or no options because of both size and gender, I am interested in how clothes structurally fit on certain bodies affects self-expression, how it can be used as a method to manage stigma, and how fat and trans people use this to navigate between visibility and invisibility. Our analysis hopes to demonstrate that clothing is a fruitful inroad for thinking about the person we want to be and the kind of person we can be based on social operations of power, discourses, and social meaning. (*note: I use "fat" as a neutral term to refer to non-normative bodies marked by size attributed to body fat, and "trans" to refer to a diverse range of gender identities that transgress biological notions of binary gender).

April 17 – (Panel Session 2 of 2) - Art and the Feminine: the urgency of art and art education in balancing the human spirit

Makram Ayache, Undergraduate student, Department of Drama, Faculty of Arts

The masculine and feminine only exist as paradoxically opposite and complementary ends of a spectrum. Neither spirit can exist alone as we can only refer to them in relation to the other. This talk will explore how patriarchal and capitalist norms minimize and infantilize the feminine. Just think: maturity is linear, level headed, objective thinking while childish behaviour is romantic, systematic, and ecological. Singing and crying in the workplace look ridiculous when we’ve normalized long, meticulously concentrated work with the profit motive in mind. I argue that a balance of the feminine and masculine is integral to a healthy existence, and this is reinforced by corporations introducing the feminine into the workplace by bringing in interpersonal weekend workshops like the Dale Carnegie Training seminars or drama based training programs which are becoming more frequent.

To combat oppressive systems of capitalism and patriarchy, it is imperative that we focus our energy on the other side of the human experience: art, theatre, poetry, song, and dance. Sir Ken Robertson says that internationally, the sciences and social sciences take precedent over the arts. This model is masculine and demands linear, reductionist thinking. And while the benefits of the masculine are apparent in the marvel of modern medicine and space exploration, it becomes toxic in its lack of
systemic and unified or humane approach. I hope to invite a lively conversation with more questions than answers that ultimately help us consider how we can feminize our spaces through art.

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Room 7-152 (7th Floor Education North Building)
Department of Educational Policy Studies, Faculty of Education
*venue, date, and time may be subject to change due to audience interest and participation.

The Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS) is an interdisciplinary “hub” for scholarly work in sexual and gender minority studies. Housed in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, the Institute’s mission is to help enhance possibilities for groundbreaking research, policy development, education, community outreach, and service provision focused on sexual and gender minorities and their issues and concerns. A special thanks to the Department of Educational Policy Studies for providing meeting space.

For more information regarding Inside/OUT, please visit our website: www.ismss.ualberta.ca or contact ismss@ualberta.ca.